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Single center study of mortality in out of working hours' acute medical admissions

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Objectives: Aim of this study was to find the outcome of acute medical admissions at weekend, out of hour's period and night.

Methods: This retrospective single center study included all acute medical admissions to Colombo South Teaching hospital during the first six months of the year 2011. We have compared the mortality rates at weekdays with weekend, working hours with out of working hours and night with day time. All these death rates were calculated for both overall mortality and late mortality.

Results: Total in hospital mortality was significantly increased for admissions on Thursdays, at night and during out of working hours. Although the mortality rates at weekends were higher than the mortality at weekdays for both overall deaths and late deaths the difference was not statistically significant. For late deaths (after seven days) mortality is significantly increased only for admissions at night when compared with the day time.

Conclusions: Patients with acute medical conditions are more likely to die in hospital if they are admitted on a Thursday, at night or at out of working hours' period. This effect is likely to be due to the disease severity on admission as well as reduced staffing level at night and out of hour's period.